



Sen. Dale Brandland's

UPDATE FROM OLYMPIA

2/27/03

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Committee Assignments
Agriculture (Vice Chair)
Health & Long Term Care
Judiciary

BILLS TO WATCH

SB 5728 – the Liability Reform Act of 2003. We heard several amendments in committee on the bill this week. It passed the Judiciary Committee on Thursday morning.

SB 5673 – clarifying civil liability for jails. This bill passed the Judiciary Committee and is now in Rules.

Senate backs fast-pursuit rules

Brandland supports efforts to set minimum policy requirements

The former Whatcom County Sheriff recalled the Sept. 13, 2001 death of Deputy Matt Herzog, a five-year veteran of the Sheriff's Office.

"This was the darkest day of my career," said Brandland, a 27-year law enforcement veteran.

Brandland said the bill (SB 5165) would not prohibit pursuits by law enforcement officers, but would simply establish guidelines. – *Bellingham Herald*, 2/19/03

Dear Friends,

I want to tell you about legislation we passed last week in the Senate that will have a significant impact on our state's economy and jobs climate, especially here in Northwest Washington.

Senate Bill 5161 – Commonly referred to as "the ergonomics bill," this legislation will overturn the Department of Labor and Industries' mandated workplace safety rules regarding musculoskeletal injuries. Businesses will be able to *voluntarily comply* if they so choose.

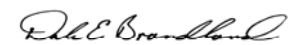
These ergonomic rules will cost businesses hundreds of millions of dollars – costs that will result in higher prices, layoffs and businesses leaving this state for greener pastures. Our state simply cannot afford them. Employers in Washington are already facing a 29 percent increase in workers' compensation rates, the second highest minimum wage in the nation and an unemployment tax increase anywhere from 14 to 70 percent! It's a wonder anyone can stay in business.

Also, I have co-sponsored legislation to help seniors and disabled persons with the high cost of prescriptions drugs.

Senate Bill 5904 – This legislation has passed the Senate Health & Long Term Care Committee and is now in the Senate Ways & Means Committee. It creates four programs:

- A prescription drug discount program – this requires the Health Care Authority to negotiate lower prices for drugs purchased by any enrolled Washington resident 55 and older or disabled, with a family income up to 250 percent of the federal poverty level.
- A Medicaid senior prescription drug program for residents 65 and older with a family income up to 150 percent of the federal poverty level by way of a federal waiver.
- A pharmacy connection program through the Health Care Authority – this will provide information about, and help eligible residents enroll in, manufacturer-sponsored assistance programs.
- Senior prescription drug information and training program to educate seniors on safe and appropriate prescription drug use.

I will continue to update you on these proposals as they make their way through the legislative process. Please contact me with any questions or concerns.


Dale E. Brandland, 42nd Legislative District

NOTE: Please feel free to share this update with your friends and neighbors. If you would like to be on the e-mail distribution list, contact this office with your name and address.